



# STATE OF CONNECTICUT

## DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

### TESTIMONY PRESENTED BEFORE THE PUBLIC HEALTH COMMITTEE February 11, 2009

Meg Hooper, Chief, Planning Branch 509-7128

### **House Bill 6362 - An Act Concerning Access to Marriage or Civil Union Certificates that Contain The Social Security Numbers of the Parties**

The Department of Public Health **opposes** House Bill 6362.

This bill requires general statute 7-51a to be amended to establish that only the parties to a marriage or civil union and the local registrar shall have access to the Social Security numbers specified on such license and application for such license.

#### Fact regarding collection of Social Security Numbers on Marriage and Civil Union Licenses and Certificates – the Current Process.

- The current process for issuing a marriage or civil union license is a manual paper based system. All the relevant demographic and administrative information is obtained and inscribed on the paper license, including the social security numbers of the applicants.
- C.G.S. section 17b-137a requires that the social security number of a marriage or civil union applicant be recorded on the license. This requirement is related to child support enforcement.
- The paper license is issued to the parties. The parties provide the license to the officiator performing the ceremony.
- The officiator of the marriage or civil union takes possession of the completed paper license prior to performing the ceremony. Since the application and the license must contain the social security numbers of the marriage or civil union applicants, and the officiator must have the completed license prior to performing the ceremony, the officiator has access to the social security numbers.
- The officiator is responsible for signing the license upon completion of the ceremony and forwarding the signed license to the registrar in the town where the ceremony took place.
- The town registrar accepts and certifies the certificate for filing.
- The town registrar sends an attested copy of the marriage or civil union certificate, which includes the social security numbers, to the Department of Public Health Vital Records unit.

Under the current manual paper based system the person in charge of processing the marriage license, including the officiator, will have access to the social security numbers of the marriage or civil union applicants. **Until such time as this process becomes electronic, we have no mechanism to limit officiator access to the social security numbers.** Implementation of this bill will have a **significant fiscal impact on the Department and local registrars.**

Thank you for your consideration of the Department's views on this bill.

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